

THE CORRESPONDENT.

Magna est Veritas et Prevalebit.

VOL. I.

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NO. 2.

PROSPECTUS.

The object contemplated by this Journal, is the diffusion of correct principles, which alone form the basis of morals and of happiness.

Notwithstanding the vast number of publications that are daily issuing from the press, there is still wanting a paper which will fearlessly advocate the paramount importance of the laws of *Nature*, and the dignity of *Reason*. It is by departing from these that good sense has been nearly banished from the earth; that mankind are in darkness as to their true interests; and that all the miseries which afflict society have originated.

The pages of the *Correspondent* will be devoted chiefly to communications, and to miscellaneous articles, calculated to enlarge the mind, and bring man back to the path from which he has deviated. Although we recognize nothing to be true that is incapable of proof, or demonstration, the erroneous opinions entertained by individuals, can form no apology for the neglect or the violation of the rules of courtesy. No illiberal discussions or personalities, will be permitted: it shall be our constant aim to establish a character for temperate and sober reasoning, for open investigation, and for universal conciliation.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

PROFESSIONAL LAW.

Mr. Editor: That the profession of a lawyer, as society is presently constituted, is necessary, and in many instances highly respectable, no one, I am persuaded, will venture to dispute. But that it is attended with innumerable evils, and followed by many unprincipled men, appears equally obvious. How to remedy this calamity, however, is not so apparent. So long as mankind are disposed to take advantage of each

other, so long will disputes be engendered and law-suits become necessary. As the profession of the law cannot, therefore, be dispensed with, would it not promote the interests of society if lawyers, like the judges, were to be appointed by the legislature, and to be allowed fixed salaries? By this arrangement they would no longer have an interest in the increase of litigation, fewer causes would exist, and justice would be more speedily and effectually administered. Why are the mazes of professional law so perplexed and puzzled, that even the lawyers themselves are absolutely at a loss to know what is professional law, on points where essential justice is plain and palpable to the most moderate capacity? Why, but because the more community is bewildered in its labyrinths, the more professional lawyers gain by it.

Essential law is nothing else but the *lesson* or *promulgation* of essential justice; and essential justice is simple, plain, and evident to the commonest understanding. It is professional law that encumbers it, that confuses it in inextricable intricacy. What makes hundreds and thousands of dollars and of acres be diverted from the just channel, not through the ambiguity of meaning, or the uncertainty of intention, but through the inadvertency of a word, or the untechnicality of a phrase? Professional law. What makes the

life of man depend, not on his innocence or guilt, but on the wording of a statute, or the form of a warrant? Professional law. What makes the lawyer exert his abilities promiscuously, as he is paid for it, for guilt or innocence? What makes him as readily strain his ingenuity "to make the bad appear the better cause," as to support the good, not according to the plain and direct rules of simple right, but according to complicated circumscriptions of refining subtlety? Professional law, or the law's being a profession. This it is that hoodwinks the understanding, and perverts the judgment of every rank of society, in what are called civilized countries, and makes us scarcely entertain a thought of enquiring into what essential law consists.

Professional law, in fact, leads to most of the evils of society. It makes *bargaining* every thing, and *equality of value* nothing; it excludes the poor man from recovering his right, because he has not money to purchase professional justice, and makes the rich command the right of others, because he has money for which professional justice is sold to him; it makes the price of recovery of debt often swell to four times the amount of the debt itself; it makes the lawyers, in spite of themselves, prey on the misfortunes and litigations of their fellow citizens; it makes every mechanic and tradesman, if he has a son of any smartness or intellect, anxious to make him an attorney, to give him *the trade* of a lawyer. In fine, professional law makes every man now afraid to put his pen to paper without a lawyer at his elbow.

Although the giving lawyers fixed salaries, and letting them receive no other fees or emoluments from their practice might not remedy all the

evils consequent on professional law, it would certainly be a great diminution of its pernicious influence. It would reduce the number of lawyers, and, by investing the power of appointing them in the executive, a guarantee would be given that none but men of talent and integrity would be admitted as practitioners. Such an alteration might not please every one, but it does not appear why it should be objected to by honorable men, who are ambitious of rendering the profession respectable. JUSTITIA.

For the Correspondent.

THE JEWS.

Mr. Editor: Your correspondent CELSUS having stated only *one* of the reasons that induce the people of my nation to reject Christianity, I hope you will do us the justice, (which has been hitherto denied by most of the journals,) of giving publicity to the following outline of the principal objections, which we have uniformly urged, when called on to renounce the religion of our fathers and embrace that of Jesus:—

It was never ordained to the Jews by their law to believe in a messiah. It is no where to be found, that Israel was threatened to be no longer the chosen people, if it did not believe in the future messiah. In no place is it said, that the Judaical law is the adumbration or figure of another law; on the contrary, it is every where said, that the law of Moses is to be *eternal*. Every prophet, even he who should work miracles, in order to change any thing in the law of Moses, was ordered to be punished with death. True it is, that some prophets foretold to the Jews, in their calamities, that they should have one day a deliverer; but that this deliverer would be the support of the Mosaic law, instead of being the destroyer.

The Jews are in constant expectation of a messiah, who is to be a powerful and a just king. One proof of the eternal immutability of the Mosaic religion, is, that the Jews, dispersed all over the earth, have for all that not changed a single title in their law, and that the Israelites of Rome, of England, of Holland, of Germany, of Poland, of Turkey, of Persia, &c. have constantly held the same doctrine since the taking of Jerusalem by Titus, without there having risen up amongst them any the least sect, that has deviated from one single observance, or from one single opinion of the Israelite nation.

On the contrary, the Christians have been divided among themselves from the very first of their religion's coming into existence. They are, at this moment, split into more sects than there are Christian states, and they have persecuted each other with fire and sword for above fifteen centuries. If the apostle Paul allowed it to be right that the Jews should continue to observe the precepts of their law, the Christians of these days ought not to reproach them for doing what this apostle had permitted them to do. It is not out of hatred and malice that Israel had not acknowledged Jesus; neither is it out of base and carnal views that the Jews adhere to their ancient law. It has been only in the hope of the blessings of heaven that they have remained faithful to it, notwithstanding the persecutions by the Babylonians, the Syrians and the Romans; notwithstanding their dispersion and disgrace; and notwithstanding the hatred of so many nations. A whole people ought not to be called carnal, who, for near forty centuries, have been the martyrs of God. It is the Christians who have had carnal advantages in view; witness almost all the first fathers of the church, who

hoped to live a thousand years in a new Jerusalem, amidst abundance, and amidst all bodily delights.

It is impossible that the Jews should have crucified the true messiah, since the prophets expressly say, that the messiah should come to cleanse Israel of all sin; that he would not leave a single stain in Israel. It would be the most horrible sin, the most abominable pollution, as well as the most palpable contradiction, that God should send his messiah to be crucified.

The precepts of the ten commandments being *perfect*, any new mission was entirely useless. The Mosaic law never had any mystical sense; it would be deceiving mankind, to tell them things were to be understood in a sense different from that in which they were expressed. The Christian apostles never equalled the miracles of Moses; the evangelists were not all simple people, since Luke was a physician, and Paul had studied under Gamaliel, of whom the Jews have preserved the writings. There is not the shadow of simplicity or idiotism in the apostles' requiring of the new converts to bring all their money in to them. Paul was so far from being a plain dealer, that he employed the greatest artifice on his coming to sacrifice at the temple, and in swearing before Festus and Agrippa, that he had done nothing against circumcision, and against the law of Judaism. In short, the contradictions which are to be found in the gospels, prove that those books could not be inspired by God.

LEVI.

For the Correspondent.

PROVIDENCE.

Mr. Editor: The belief in a "particular providence," words which we hear in every ones mouth, is not more absurd than it is destructive of every

amiable quality ascribed to the divinity. When a man falls from a precipice and escapes unhurt; when he survives a shipwreck, in which hundreds of his fellow men have perished; when the devouring flames that have consumed his neighbor's property, have spared his; when the shafts of the thunderbolt have carried instant death to those in the same apartment, while he is merely stunned by the shock! When escaping from one or other of these terrible calamities, which have frequently destroyed thousands, I hear the surviving individual attribute his good fortune to the immediate interposition of heaven, I cannot help smiling at his presumption. It not uncommonly happens, that the individual who sets up these pretensions, is more remarkable for his vices than for his virtues, while those who have perished, were valuable and blameless members of society; that he, in whose favor so much mercy had been shown, was without wife or children, which rendered his preservation comparatively less important, while those so prematurely cut off at the moment he was spared, left widows and a numerous offspring to lament the objects most dear to them, and on whom alone they relied for subsistence. If it was a kind interposition of providence to save in the one case, what was it but malice to abandon in the other? If it was mercy to the one, to the other it was the most atrocious cruelty.

But, says the theologian, "the ways of God are not as man's ways; his doings are inscrutable to mortals." Well then, I reply, if you can know nothing of his ways, or manner of acting, why do you attribute conduct to him which, in the estimation of all reflecting men, renders him a partial and cruel despot; a being who delights in the torment of the most vir-

tuous of his creatures, while he rewards, and prolongs the lives of the most vicious and useless? "What is man (emphatically demands Ensor) for whom God must realize his fancies, or be wanting in justice? What is man to God, infinite and uniform? A noise made by the gusty air, an atom which flows and re-flows with the tides of life; a bubble, which in the same instant swells and bursts on the surface of the ocean. For this thing's thinking, God's justice shall be impunged! Why does this miscreant, whose life is a series of vice, error, and imbecility, dogmatize on the conduct of providence? His friends die, or he is sick, or poor, or hungry, or has his liberty curtailed—mighty causes for summoning Omniscience to the bar of reason—admirable arguments why God must induct him into kingdoms afar off, and eternal happiness."

It has been justly remarked, that "misfortunes make mankind, superstitious;" but it is not easily to account for the extraordinary circumstance that some men throw away the lights of reason as they approach gloom and darkness. They create their own reverses, and then attribute them to some terrific power whom they clothe with more than domo-magical attributes, and in the operations of whose horrible agency they dream of pestilence and desolation and death. So far from any individual having a right to claim it as a special mark of favor, when he escapes from misfortunes, or to pretend that the Deity intended by calamities to manifest his displeasure as to any particular object, it is evidently more rational and consistent to attribute such occurrences to natural causes—to the operation of those eternal and immutable laws, established for the government of the universe. In no other way

can we rescue the Almighty from the charge of partiality and injustice.

CLIO.

For the Correspondent.

TRUTH.

Mr. Editor : Those who, with me, advocate a full developement of the Truth, particularly in discussions relating to religion, are frequently met with the assertion, that it would render the ignorant unhappy. This supposes that misery is a necessary concomitant of intelligence, and that felicity is the lot of the uninformed. Truth may be perverted for interested purposes ; but to admit that this ought to prejudice truth itself, would be furnishing an argument for its entire suppression, and for the encouragement of error. The partizans of erroneous systems, in all countries, have employed similar arguments to arrest the progress of knowledge. But so far from a disclosure of truth being injurious, both ancient and modern history show that it is uniformly attended with beneficial consequences, and that it is only where ignorance prevails that vice and wretchedness predominate. It is possible I may be mistaken in some points. But this remains to be shown. I hold it to be an indisputable axiom, that all decisions as to the correctness of opinions which have not been thoroughly investigated, are founded in error.

It is also frequently asked, what we "intend to give the people if we take religion from them?" If by religion is meant those contradictory and incomprehensible systems, which no one has been able to reconcile ; those dogmas which, without examination, are every where received as truths ; I reply, that, in place of these absurdities, we recommend the cultivation of Reason, a gift undeniably conferred by the author of our being, and

the study of the Code of Nature, which that same being has conferred on all the nations of the earth. While religion tells its votaries, that their only safety is in a blind submission to their spiritual guides, Reason teaches man that his happiness consists in reciprocating benefits to his fellow man. While an inexorable priesthood are vainly denouncing eternal perdition on all who question the truth of their mandates, Nature lays open her volume, in which the most attractive inducements to virtue are presented to the sight, and the vicious insensibly impelled to pay her homage. This is our substitute for what is called religion. This alone is sufficient to guarantee human happiness. The errors of education, the vortex of discordant systems in which mankind are ingulphed, popular opinion, and family connections ; all of these combine to retain them in bondage, and perpetuate their misery. It is our object to break the charm ; to promote inquiry and investigation, by stimulating our fellow-citizens, freely and fearlessly to exercise their intellectual faculties. In no other way can Morality be fixed on a permanent basis ; by no other means can felicity be assured to mortals.

MENTOR.

For the Correspondent.

DEISM DEFENDED, No. II.

Mr. Editor : The conduct of the Deity in the promulgation of the gospel, appears not to the eye of reason more compatible with his immutability and omnipotence, than the history of his actions under the law accords with his benevolence.

Christians assert, that the human race merited eternal reprobation, because their common father had transgressed the divine command, and that the crucifixion of the son of God was the only sacrifice of suffi-

cient efficacy to satisfy eternal justice. But it is no less inconsistent with justice, and subversive of morality, that millions should be responsible for a crime which they had no share in committing, than that, if they really had committed it, the crucifixion of an innocent being could absolve them from moral turpitude. Certainly this is a mode of legislation peculiar to a state of savageness and anarchy; it is the irrefragable logic of tyranny and imposture.

The supposition that God has ever supernaturally revealed his will to man at any period than the original creation of the human race, necessarily involves a compromise of his benevolence. It assumes that he withheld from mankind a benefit which it was in his power to confer; that he suffered his creatures to remain in ignorance of truths essential to their happiness and salvation; that during the elapse of innumerable ages, every individual of the human race had perished without redemption from an universal stain, which the Deity at length descended in person to erase; and that the good and wise of all ages, involved in one common fate with the ignorant and the wicked, have been tainted by involuntary and inevitable error, which torment, infinite in duration, can never expiate. In vain will they assure us, with amiable inconsistency, that the mercy of God will be extended to the virtuous, and that the vicious will alone be punished. The foundation of the Christian religion is manifestly compromised by a concession of this nature. A subterfuge so palpable, plainly annihilates the necessity of the incarnation of God for the redemption of the human race, and represents the descent of the messiah as a gratuitous display of Deity, solely adapted to

perplex, to terrify, and to embroil mankind.

It is sufficiently evident, that an omniscient Being never conceived the design of reforming the world by Christianity. Omniscience would surely have foreseen the inefficacy of that system, which experience demonstrates not only to have been utterly impotent in restraining, but to have been most active in exciting the malevolent propensities of men. During the period which elapsed between the removal of the seat of empire to Constantinople in 328, and its capture by the Turks in 1453, what salutary influence did Christianity exercise on that world which it was intended to enlighten? Never before was Europe the theatre of such ceaseless and sanguinary wars; never were the people so brutalized by ignorance and debased by slavery.

We will admit that one prediction of Jesus has been indisputably fulfilled—"I come not to bring peace on the earth, but a sword." Christianity, indeed, has equalled Judaism in the atrocities, and exceeded them in the extent of its desolation. Eleven millions of men, women and children have been killed in battle, butchered in their sleep, burnt to death at public festivals of sacrifice, poisoned, tortured, assassinated, and pillaged in the spirit of the *religion of peace*, and for the glory of the most merciful God!

In vain will the priesthood tell us, that these terrible effects flow not from Christianity, but from the abuse of it. No such excuse will avail to palliate the enormities of a religion pretending to be divine. A limited intelligence is only so far responsible for the effects of its agency as it foresaw, or might have foreseen them; but Omniscience is manifestly chargeable with all the consequences of its conduct. Christiani-

ty itself declares that the worth of the tree is to be determined by the quality of its fruit. The extermination of infidels; the mutual persecutions of hostile sects; the midnight massacres and slow burning of thousands, because their creed contained either more or less than the orthodox standard, of which Christianity has been the immediate occasion; and the invariable opposition which philosophy has ever encountered from the spirit of revealed religion, plainly show, that a very slight portion of sagacity was sufficient to have estimated at its true value, the advantages of that belief to which some theists are unaccountably attached.

Great stress is laid by Christians on the originality of their systems of morals. If this claim be just, either their religion must be false, or the Deity has willed that opposite modes of conduct should be pursued by mankind, at different periods, under the same circumstances; which is clearly absurd.

The doctrine of acquiescing in the most insolent despotism, of praying for, and loving our enemies, of faith and humility, appears to fix the perfection of the human character in that abjectness and credulity, which priests and tyrants of all ages have found sufficiently convenient for their purposes. It is evident, that a whole nation of Christians (could such an anomaly maintain itself a day) would become, like cattle, the property of the first occupier. It is evident, that ten highwaymen would be sufficient to subjugate the world, if it were composed of slaves who dared not to resist oppression.

The apathy to love and friendship recommended by the christian creed, would, if attainable, be not less pernicious. This enthusiasm of anti-social misanthropy, if it were an ac-

tual rule of conduct, and not the speculation of a few interested persons, would speedily annihilate the human race. A total abstinence from social intercourse is not, perhaps, enjoined, but it is strenuously recommended, and was actually practiced by the primitive Christians. The penalties, as mentioned by Gibbon, inflicted by that monster Constantine, the first *Christian* emperor, on the pleasures of unlicensed love, are so iniquitously severe, that no modern legislator could have affixed them to the most atrocious crimes. This cold-blooded and hypocritical ruffian, cut his son's throat, strangled his wife, murdered his father-in-law and his brother-in-law, and maintained at his court a set of blood-thirsty and bigotted Christian priests, one of whom was sufficient to excite the one half of the world to massacre the other.

We are willing to admit that a few axioms of morality, which christianity has borrowed from the philosophers of Greece and India, dictate, in an unconnected state, rules of conduct worthy of regard; but the purest and most elevated lessons of morality must remain nugatory, the most probable inducements to virtue must fail of their effect, so long as the slightest weight is attached to that dogma, which is the vital essence of revealed religion: *Faith* is set up as the criterion of merit or demerit; a man is to be judged, not by the purity of his intentions, but by the orthodoxy of his creed; a blind assent to certain propositions is to outweigh, in the balance of Christianity, the most generous and elevated virtue. But belief, like that of every other passion, is precisely proportionate to the degrees of excitement. That only is believed which is apprehended to be true; nor can the mind, by any exertion, avoid at-

taching credit to an opinion attended with overwhelming evidence. Belief is not an act of volition, nor can it be regulated by the mind; it is manifestly incapable, therefore, of either merit or criminality. The system which assumes a false criterion of moral virtue, must be as pernicious as it is absurd. Above all, it cannot be divine, as it is impossible that the Creator of the human mind should be ignorant of its powers.

ARISTIDES.

The Correspondent.

Magna est Veritas et Prevalebit.

NEW-YORK, FEBRUARY 3, 1827.

From the Times of Jan. 24, 1827.

"*The Correspondent*.—We have received the first number of a weekly paper under this title, being an open attack upon the *Bible*, the authenticity of which is denied, the Christian system blasphemed, and Deism defended! Tom Paine is the hero, and *Reason* the idol. It is unnecessary to dwell on the details or the design of this publication. It carries its condemnation on its front, and in this intelligent and Christian community "its end will be to be burned."

When we contemplated the establishment of this journal, we were aware that in departing from the beaten track, every engine which ignorance, prejudice, and interest could devise, would be put in operation to frustrate our purpose; that our motives would be perverted; and that we should be calumniated, and assailed with opprobrious epithets by those who subsist on the credulity of mankind, and to whom nothing is more appalling than august Truth. This, however, so far from intimidating us, was a stimulant to perseverance. Regarding, as we do, the vituperations of bigots and fanatics, as the strongest evidence of their own conviction of the weakness of their cause, we felt no alarm at being attacked. We could not fail to remem-

ber, that when it is attempted to stifle free inquiry, there is reason to suspect some latent imposture. With these impressions, we were no way surprised at the appearance of the above editorial paragraph, in which the writer of the *Times*, without attempting to refute a single argument of our correspondents, denounces our first number as blasphemous; and, as if his *ipsa dixit* ought to be regarded as the expression of public opinion, he calls on "this Christian community" to consign the work to the flames.

It is evident that this denunciation flows from a mind imbued with prejudice, and into which a single ray of light has never penetrated. It would be folly, therefore, to entertain any other feeling for its author than that of compassion. We do, indeed, commiserate the man who, in this advanced period of knowledge, could so far degrade that greatest of human inventions—the press—as to render it the vehicle of reviving, in this free country, the ferocious deeds of the most barbarous ages; for if the works of those who are sincerely endeavoring to enlighten mankind, are to receive no other answer than that of being consigned to the flames, the next step would be the dooming to a similar fate the authors of these writings. The fires of Smithfield would be rekindled; this sacred soil of liberty would be polluted by the exhibition of those human sacrifices, those legalized murders, those horrible outrages on justice and humanity, which formerly disgraced the fairest portions of Europe.

But Christianity, it seems, has been "blasphemed," because our correspondent CELSUS has dared to question the authenticity of the new Testament writings. This, however, is nothing new. Their authority was disputed as early as the second

century, and has been the subject of investigation ever since, without the difficulties attending it having been removed. If CELSUS is mistaken, this could be easily shown. If he is not mistaken, abusive language, though it may gratify the feelings of the narrow minded, can never be recognized as legitimate argument. After all, the word *blasphemy* is of very equivocal meaning. It was originally derived from the Greeks, and was only used by that people to designate an injury done to *personal* reputation, but never in reference to creeds or systems. Whenever the phrase is adopted to stigmatize liberality of sentiment, it subjects the party using it to the charge of despotic intolerance, and ignorant fanaticism.

We see no reason why our pages should be shut against a fair defence of "Tom Paine," any more than against a defence of Washington, or of any other man whose character may have been aspersed. The avowed advocates of truth, we could not for a moment maintain our consistency, if we did not strictly adhere to a course marked out by justice and propriety. It is not enough to tell us that Paine was a bad man, an infidel, and so forth. We are satisfied that his character has been calumniated; but were it otherwise, is he to be denied the rights and privileges which are guaranteed in almost every country, even to the worst of felons? Is his memory to be stigmatized, on the bare statement of his enemies, and no chance given to his friends to prefer a legitimate defence in his behalf? Such policy might well suit a Turkish Sultan, or a Dey of Algiers; but it can never be countenanced in a country where the people are the sovereigns, and where the laws recognize no artificial distinctions either of religion or politics.

The branding an opponent with the name of *infidel*, is a shallow device of ignorance and fanaticism, in order to awe nations from the path of knowledge and of freedom. That man only is an infidel who professes to believe what he does not believe. All other explanations of the word are invented for the purpose of deception.

The exercising the noblest faculty which the Almighty has conferred on man, and which elevates him to the first rank in the animal system, is cried down as a species of *idolatry*. Yet those very men who sneer at what they term "Reason the idol," avail themselves of this same gift in all their sage lucubrations to decry its importance; and it is only when they find that it can no longer aid them in their endeavors to prop up their rotten systems, that they declaim against it. Then it is that reason is corrupt, and ought to be excluded in every investigation calculated to expose their frauds and deceptions. But if reason is corrupt, we ask who made it so? An emanation from the Deity, it could not have been otherwise, in its original state, than pure as the divine essence. The fact is, reason is paralyzed in infancy, and continues to be so until man arrives at full age, by those who have the charge of his education. Instead of impressing on the minds of youth correct ideas, we every where find the greatest care taken to inculcate a belief in fables and mystery; instead of gratifying that inquisitiveness so natural to the juvenile mind, and presenting to it sensible objects, by which it might acquire a knowledge of realities, the established systems of education initiate their pupils by prejudicing them in favor of certain tenets, which they are utterly unable to comprehend. Reason is thus benumbed at the very moment we enter into life; opinions

the most absurd are adopted, and in every after stage we are surrounded by a combination of circumstances, over which we have no control, that gives to the delusion the appearance of reality. No sooner, however, are the trammels imposed by education broken through, than Reason resumes its empire; man appears in his original and proper character, and so far from being a degraded being, it is only then that he becomes rational, and capable of discharging aright the duties he owes to society.

PAINE'S BIRTH DAY.

Monday last being the anniversary of the birth of Thomas Paine, several gentlemen partook of a dinner, in celebration of the event, at the Bank Lodge, William-street; Mr. Benjamin Offin in the chair.—After the table was cleared, a number of toasts were given, the particulars of which we subjoin. On “the memory of Thomas Paine” being drank, the chairman rose, and addressed the meeting as follows:

Gentlemen—On no occasion but such as this day presents, should I have thought of addressing an assembly, composed of the citizens of this free and happy country. But feeling, as I do, the blessings of liberty, to be silent would be ungrateful. I do not celebrate the birth-day of the late Thomas Paine because he was a native of that land which gave me birth. Had he been a Jew or a Turk by birth, or a follower of Moses, Jesus, or Mahomet in religion, my views of that great and eminent, but neglected and despised man, would be the same. His services in the cause of liberty, at the period of the struggle of this country for freedom, are too well known and too generally acknowledged, to require my feeble aid in directing your minds to that subject.

My remarks will therefore be confined to a short appeal to his enemies—to those of his enemies who admit his services, but who despise his name and memory. To them I would say:—Citizens of a free and happy republic! what dreadful crime did Thomas Paine commit, that his name and memory should be so hateful to you, that he should be mentioned with so much horror from the pulpit, and be made, by bigoted priests, a scare-crow to frighten your children? He labored faithfully in the cause of liberty. He wrote his invaluable treatise of “Common Sense,” at a time when your fathers stood most in need of it. He followed your armies and encouraged the soldiers to persevere, and finally they would conquer. He volunteered to cross the wide Atlantic to borrow and even to beg money to purchase food and clothes for the naked half starved heroes, who were fighting for that liberty which you are now enjoying. Years of incessant application to the cause of freedom were devoted by him, whose very name is now rendered terrible to your ears by your teachers.

Citizens of America! Is this wise? Is this candid? How long will ye be blinded by your spiritual guides? Assert your dignity as freemen—judge for yourselves. You, perhaps, will reply, that Thomas Paine wrote the “Age of Reason.” He did; and what of that? You have leave to answer it; and prove (if you can) its folly and evil tendency. Set your priests to work: they labor but one day in seven; tell them to employ the other six in exposing and confuting the errors of Paine. Let them prove (if they can) that had it not been for his labors in the cause of civil and religious liberty, you would now have been able to pay them for preaching. The revo-

lution of America was one of the greatest events that ever occurred in the history of the world. At that momentous period, this was the only country in the world which had a chance of becoming free. Thomas Paine saw it; and, thanks, immortal thanks be to him, and to all those wise legislators and warriors, who wrote and fought in the glorious cause!

Citizens of America! Contrast your then situation with that in which you now find yourselves. At that period your fathers had to contend with a powerful and implacable enemy, at times without money or even clothes; stigmatized as rebels when fighting for their just rights; and had they been finally subdued, most of their leaders, and Thomas Paine among them, would have been hung up like dogs!

The enjoyment of fifty years of liberty has produced wonders. It has made you one of the wisest and most powerful nations on earth. In the revolution, you had but few friends; now you have no enemies. Then you were half starved, naked and destitute; now you are well clothed, fed, and have plenty to share with the persecuted sons of liberty of all nations. Then your towns were burnt and destroyed by your cruel invaders; since then, you have taught your foes a lesson not to be forgotten. At that time your political atmosphere was dark and lowering; now it is as bright as the sun in the firmament. Then your eagles were confined to your own coast; now they spread their wings over every ocean, and hover even around the thrones of despots. The love of happiness and the love of liberty, are the same in man. He ceases to love freedom only when he ceases to be rational or to exist. Such is the value of liberty to man, that the unknown power we call God,

has made the love of it a law of our nature. Man has no alternative, whatever may be the extent of the freedom of his will, he has no power to hate liberty. The greatest tyrants that ever existed, must be convinced of the value of liberty, or they would not, in all ages, have robbed human beings of this valuable treasure. The revolution afforded an opportunity for the whole world to see what the love of freedom could perform. When unfettered, like a mighty torrent it burst forth and overwhelmed all opposition. Civil and ecclesiastical tyrants have endeavored to arrest its progress: but in vain. The decree has gone forth, and the blessings your forefathers procured by their toils and blood, at this moment alarm the hearts of every tyrant in Europe, and induces them to soften the rigors of their despotism. It is not over rating your situation, by saying that it is truly enviable. When I survey your internal improvements in canals, in roads, and in settling the western states, I find that you put famine at defiance, and war you have no cause to dread. When I consider your high standing among nations, your ships of commerce ploughing every ocean, and your star spangled banner waving in the commercial ports of every clime, proclaiming liberty in the very face of despots—when to these blessings is added, that America is an asylum for those who love liberty in all parts of the world, that her government is just and her constitution liberal, she is in no danger of traitors or treason.

Americans! I appeal to you for the truth of the foregoing contrast. If you ask me by whom were all these blessings procured, I answer, by the indefatigable exertions of our brave heroes, one of the greatest of whom was THOMAS PAINE.

Mr. Carver then spoke as follows:

Friends and Fellow Citizens: We are met this day to commemorate the birth of the immortal Thomas Paine, whose writings have illuminated the world more than all the writers of ancient and modern times. His whole soul and mind were absorbed in contemplating the means of emancipating a subjugated people from deep rooted errors, and seating them upon the firm foundation of reason, justice, and common sense. Unshackled by corrupt and vulgar prejudices, and disdaining the nonsensical parade of kings and priests, whom he portrayed in language so strong that it will never be forgotten, he proved that kings, priests, and peasants, were estimated alike by their beneficent Creator; that the doctrine of the divine right of kings, and the inspiration of priests, were the offsprings of fraud and force. Paine said, that rebels against reason, were real rebels; and he, who in defence of reason, rebels against tyrants, has a better title to "Defender of the Faith," than all the kings that ever reigned. Future posterity will hail with fervent rapture, the political era of Paine and his coadjutors. His 'Common Sense,' his 'Rights of Man,' and 'Age of Reason,' gave a death wound to kings and priestly governments; and should the press, the great bulwark of the peoples' safety, continue to publish freely, pure republican principles, and science continues to make such a progress as it has for the last half century, different nations will put in practice and follow the example of the American Patriots that fought and bled in the cause of liberty. When an oppressed people rise in the majesty of their strength, with the motto of "Death or Liberty," the power of their oppressors will crumble, like a ball of dust in

the hands of a nation determined to be free.

Fellow Citizens: When we reflect on the probable fate of Paine, had not his principles triumphed in America; and had Britain subjugated these states, he would, with Thomas Jefferson, John Hancock, and Samuel Adams, been taken to England and hanged, their hearts plucked from their bodies, and exhibited to the populace; the executioner saying, "Behold the hearts of traitors!" Had the patriots and friends of liberty failed to gain their independence in this country, they would have had a king, or a hereditary crown prince, to reign over them, whose salary would have been more in one day than the president of these states receives in one year; besides a numerous host of nick-named plunderers, called princes, earls, lords, knights of the garter, groom of the stole, hawk feeder, &c. and to complete and carry the infamous traffic into full force, they would have had an established church, with twelve lawn-slieved bishops, each of them receiving eight or ten thousand pounds per annum, for preaching up passive obedience and non-resistance. And the American farmers would have had to give to those idle drones the tenth part of all their produce to support them, and a host of dependent priests, in dissipation, pride and luxury.

We must not, fellow-citizens, expect to enjoy the blessings of a free government any longer than the press remains free. If the press be shackled, our liberties are in danger; if the press be silenced by tyrants, demagogues, and priests, our freedom is gone forever, and the fair goddess of liberty will have to take up her abode in another part of the earth. This has been the fate of the republics of Greece and Rome, and this always

will be the case with all republican governments, unless the citizens watch the conduct of those whom they appoint to office. It is not sufficient that we paint the emblems of liberty on bits of silk, and carry them through the streets, if we let go the immortal principles as laid down by Paine. There never was a people more indebted to an individual, than the Americans are to Thomas Paine for the liberties which they enjoy: but interest, fear, and superstition, prevent even those that call themselves republicans, from toasting to his memory at their public festivals. Let us suppose for a moment, that Paine had been a Jew, a disciple of Zoroaster, or a Mahometan, and not a deist; this would have been of no consequence to the people for whom he so eminently contributed his talents to accomplish their liberties. To his creator alone, with all the rest of his species, he was accountable for his faith or unbelief. Let us, fellow-citizens, boldly advocate pure, genuine republican principles, as handed down by the immortal Paine, fearless of all that oppose, whether they be kings, aristocrats, or priests.

The preceding addressers were received with the most enthusiastic applause. Several other gentlemen addressed the meeting, but our limits compel us to postpone the publication of their speeches until our next.

TOASTS, given from the Chair:

1. The memory of Thomas Paine. (in solemn silence, the company standing.)
2. The memory of General Washington. (in solemn silence.)
3. The memory of Thomas Jefferson. (in solemn silence.)
4. The memory of Benjamin* Franklin. (in solemn silence.)
5. The memory of Elihu Palmer, Voltaire, Hume, and all those deceased philosophers who, by their writings, contributed to subvert

superstition, and vindicate the rights of humanity. (in solemn silence.)

6. The Honorable Dewitt Clinton, Governor of the state of New-York, the friend and patron of science and literature. (with three times three.)

7. General Andrew Jackson, the intrepid republican, the tried friend of his country, and the people's favorite. (with three times three.)

8. An unshackled Press—the terror of despots—the bulwark of freemen—the hope of slaves.

9. Kings to the plough—priests to the spade.

10. May those places called churches, be converted into temples of science and reason.

11. The American flag—may it serve as a lesson to the tyrants of the earth, that mankind require only to will it, to be free.

12. Philosophy—the medicine of the unfortunate—the ornament of the happy—which infuses liberality into masters, and makes the limbs of the slave swell beyond the measure of his chains.

13. Science—the partizan of no country, but the beneficent patron of all.

14. A monument to the INFAMY of the man who invented the word TOLERATION.

15. The day we celebrate—expunged from the Calendar of despots, but engraven on the hearts of freemen.

VOLUNTEER TOASTS.

16. Richard Carlisle, the intrepid champion of liberal principles.

17. The Empire of Reason.

18. The Editors of the Newgate Magazine.

19. May interest, popularity, or fear, never induce those who profess the principles advocated by Thomas Paine, to agree in the impositions practised on their fellow men by kings, aristocrats, and priests.

20. Reason, Liberty, and Virtue.

21. Gaie Jones.

22. Paul Jones,—the hero who first hoisted the thirteen stripes on the American flag.

23. The Rights of man, and the downfall of tyrants all over the globe.

24. May the loadstone of tyranny attract to the labyrinth of superstition, all the despots of the civilized world; when there concentrated, may some one tread on the fire of reason and common sense, springing the mine of honest indignation—overwhelming in one catastrophe the net work of superstition, and the strong but loosened shackles of despotism.

25. The Court of Rome.

26. The Cross and the Crown.

27. Religious Intolerance,—the compound of bigotry, superstition, ambition, and pride.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Pious Robbers.—In a work, entitled "Roman Tablets," which has lately appeared in London, the author gives the following details of the carrying off the boys, by a band of robbers, from the school of Terracina in Italy. The narrative is said to be nearly in the words of one of the scholars, who had the good fortune to escape the dagger of these devout assassins:

"The robbers, after having taken us from the seminary, finding we could not walk with the same rapidity as themselves, took us upon their shoulders, and did not halt until they had reached the mountains. Having met with some shepherds on the road, they ordered them to bring two fat sheep. The shepherds brought them to the place appointed; the brigands killed the sheep themselves, and cooked them before a large fire. After the repast, of which we partook, they recited a short prayer, in which they returned thanks to St. Antonio for having assisted them in their projects. One of them then read a book, in which among other histories, was that of an adventurer called Ricardo. The great enterprizes of this extraordinary man excited in them transports of admiration. Shortly afterward, sentinels were placed at certain distances, and each of the brigands rolled one of us up in his cloak. In short, after they had all kissed the image of the virgin, which they always carry about their persons, they lay down and went to sleep. The next morning at day-break we left this place, and at the end of our march pitched our camp on a mountain intersected with ravines, and almost inaccessible. We never remained more than four or five hours in the same place. I had already seen twelve

of my companions set at liberty, without its coming to my turn. Only three of us now remained prisoners: we were tied to each other with a cord by the arms. I began to make the most melancholy reflections on seeing our guards speaking to each other in a mysterious manner. One of them, who was the second chief of the band, observing that I was uneasy: "Fasani," said he, "keep up your spirits; we are thinking about putting an end to your captivity; in the mean time preach us a sermon on death." I obeyed as well as I was able: I little thought I was pronouncing my own funeral oration and that of my companions. When I had finished, the brigand dragged us to a little distance among a group of rocks which hung over a precipice: he drew his poinard, and buried it in the bosom of my two companions. The cord which tied us together pulled me after them in their fall; I fell covered with their blood. I threw myself at the feet of the assassin, implored his pity, and with the most piercing cries begged of him in the name of St. Antonio to spare my life. All this passed with the rapidity of lightning; he suspended his poinard, and appeared to hesitate. "Do not stab him!" cried the chief, "it will bring us ill luck: he has invoked St. Antonio; he is the last: *Facciamo un quadro a S. Antonio.*" I was then unbound; the chief spoke to me with kindness, gave me a ring and this pass: "Every other detachment of the company is commanded not to stop the bearer, named Fasani di Maenga. The Trinity, Virtue, Fidelity. *Antonio Mattei & Alexander Massaroni.*"

The trinity! virtue! fidelity!—What words, and in what mouths! If the young Fasani had employed simply the name of God to move these human butchers to compassion, he

would have been murdered: he begged his life in the name of Saint Antonio, and was saved! It is, perhaps, the first time that superstition has preserved any one from death.

Blunders of Juvenile Witnesses.—One of the witnesses in a trial at Cambridge, was a little boy named James Morley, apparently not more than nine or ten years of age. After the oath had been administered, the Chief Justice put a question to him in order to ascertain whether he was sensible of the nature and importance of an oath, when the following curious answer was given.—Chief Justice: *Little Boy, do you know what you have been doing?*—Witness: *Yes, sir: I've been keeping pigs for Mr. Banyard.* The court was convulsed with laughter, and the Chief Justice directed the witness to be put aside. Baron Graham used also to be fond of catechising witnesses. On one occasion, a great hulking plough-boy was called as a witness, and the learned judge desired him, before he was put into the box, to come forward and answer some questions which he had to put. Hodge was accordingly brought *vis-a-vis* with Baron Graham, who went to work thus, having assumed the proper importance of countenance.—Baron Graham: “Little boy, [Hodge stood six feet in his stockings] do you believe that you'll go to hell if you tell a lie?”—Hodge: [with the voice of a stenor] “No-ah, I do-ant,”—Baron Graham: “O fie, fie, little boy; I see you're very ill-instructed. Take him away, take him away.” And justice lost the advantage of Hodge's evidence, because he had not proper ideas of going to hell.—*London Magazine.*

Adam's Fall.—The late Reverend Dr. Johnson, of North Leith, lived much in the esteem of his congregation, and was particularly regarded

by that portion of it consisting of the families of Newhaven fishermen.—Dr. Johnson was strict as a catechist; and on one of these occasions asked a fish-wife, ycleped Janet Flucker, “Janet, can you tell me how Adam fell?” Jenny fell a laughing, and answered, “Oh! my bonnie dear doctor, you're no serious?” “Very serious indeed,” replied the doctor. Janet, whose husband's name happened to be Adam, then said, “Weel, weel, since you will ha'it, Doctor, you see, Adam just gæd o'er the gate the tither night to Lucky Liston's for half-a-mutchkin o' whisky; when an oar lying on the road took his foot; o'er Adam fell, and brak his leg, and that's the haill truth o' the matter.”—*Edinburgh Times.*

Remnants of Superstition.—There is an inveteracy in superstitious usages which is almost incredible. Who would have thought, that in a district within seven miles of Perth, on the east bank of the Tay, the rural population, with the view of getting rid of a disease which had proved fatal to some of their cattle, should have made the whole bestial of the parish *pass through fire*! Yet this really took place towards the end of June 1826. The fact was vouched to us personally by several clergymen whom we met in the neighborhood of Scoone, within three weeks of this sacrifice to Belus.—*Sco'sman.*

Mysteries.—Among the items extracted by Mr. Sharpe from old documents relating to the celebrated “*Coventry Mysteries*,” are the following charges for the *corps dramatique*:—Coat for the Spirit of God, made of buckram, 2s.—Paid Pilate, the Bishops, and Knights, to drink between the stages, 9d.—Paid to God, 20d.—Paid to the three Marys, 2s.—Paid for making the Devil's hose, 8d.—Paid for a coat for God,

and for a pair of gloves, 3s.—Paid for a demon's face, 2s.—Paid to two worms of conscience, 16d.—Paid to three patriarchs, 18d.

Sigerius of Wittemberg.—There was a visionary who flourished in the 1st century. He was at the expence of having a plate engraved, on which he is represented kneeling before a crucifix, with a label from his mouth, "Lord Jesus, do you love me?" From that of Jesus proceeded another label, "Yes, most illustrious and most learned Sigerius, crowned poet of his imperial majesty, and most worthy rector of the university of Wittemberg."

Conscience.—A certain Jesuit preached in Arezzo, against the unchaste women, "One amongst you, especially," said he to his female auditory, "distinguishes herself by her dissolute course of life, the consciousness of shame often amends sinners, and therefore I will here name this woman publicly. But no! Christian charity forbids, she might through this become too much scandalized. I will, however, do something to point her out; so that through shame, she may arrive at conversion. I will throw my cap at her. She whom I hit is the sinner." The preacher no sooner took his cap in his hand, but all the ladies immediately stooped as low as possible. "Good heavens," exclaimed the priest, "have then all these women a bad conscience?"

Spanish Piety.—In Spain, plays are performed for the benefit of the virgins and saints, and balls are given for the deliverance of souls from purgatory. On an occasion of the above kind, a play-bill was exhibited, couched in the following terms:—"To the empress of heaven, mother of the Eternal World, the leading star of all Spain, the consolation, faithful sentinel and bulwark of all

Spaniards, the most holy Mary. For her benefit, and for the increase of her worship, the comedians of Seville will perform a very pleasant comedy, entitled *El Legatario*."

Belgian Ignorance.—The Belgians are almost exclusively catholics; and though they be, comparatively speaking an industrious people, they are, in the country districts, proverbially ignorant, and consequently, extremely bigoted and intolerant. So ignorant are they, that a Highlander of the name of Macgregor, who followed the fortunes of the exiled Stuart, officiated for many years as a parish priest, using Gaelic instead of Latin during the whole time, and was never once detected, till a countryman of his own, on a tour through the country, was both astonished and delighted at hearing the well known Highland song of "Bendowren" chanted at the altar.

Absolution.—One of the holy candlesticks in a church at Antwerp, having once been stolen, the monks caused the dimensions of it to be accurately chalked on the wall, and under it to be placed words in Latin to this effect:—"If any person, whose conscience is burdened with any grievous sin, will come and give a silver candlestick of the same size as this drawn out upon the wall, he shall be absolved from the same."

. Arrangements have now been made by which the CORRESPONDENT will appear regularly every Saturday. It will be delivered at the dwelling houses of the subscribers in town, unless otherwise ordered, and forwarded by mail to the country. Those to whom copies of the Prospectus, or of the first number of this paper were furnished, are requested to transmit the names and address of subscribers, to 114 Fulton-street.